Four Chambers Releases Latest Book
Ms. X's Ocean by Elizabeth McNeil launches February 18th at the Hive

Phoenix, AZ (January 30, 2017) . . . Local publisher Four Chambers will be releasing its latest book, a collection of poems entitled Ms. X's Ocean by ASU professor Elizabeth McNeil, Saturday, February 18th, 2017 at the Hive (2222 N 16th St, Phoenix, AZ 85006) at 7 pm. This event is open to the public and free. For more information, visit http://fourchamberspress.com/msx.

Updating the confessional tradition of Anne Sexton's Transformations, Ms. X's Ocean is a collection of poems showing various fragments from the life of a fictitious persona, Ms. X, who was abused and molested as a child and ends up working as a prostitute. While such a story easily risks pity, victimization, or exploitation, McNeil's grim sense of humor and her determined sensitivity keep the work balanced, authentic, and emotionally true. Effortlessly moving from the ragged, gritty vernacular of hard-boiled detective fiction to imagery so lush and vivid it feels aboriginal, mythological, even mystic, McNeil is able to render the full gamut of human experience and, what's more, an allegory of contemporary femininity. Despite her hardships, Ms. X uses self-authorship and agency to put the pieces of her life back together again—finding redemption, walking “unafraid at last / into the church of [her] beating heart.”

Praising the work, Arizona Poet Laureate Alberto Ríos states, “These are poems delivered from the dark treasury of what lies beneath the skin—soul news, pain-weary and deep hearted. What defines the regular here is almost unspeakable, and far more cruelly, unbearable, but the poems form a rising testament to the enduring narrator that she can find a personal place to stand in order to tell these stories. In doing so, she is giving word to the wordless, both to herself and to those who are also her.”

About the Author
Elizabeth McNeil is an instructor in Languages and Cultures at Arizona State University. She also teaches memoir and poetry writing in the greater community, working with children, veterans, inmates, church groups, and writers over fifty. She has published numerous scholarly and creative works, including poetry in Hayden's Ferry Review, Fourteen Hills, Flyway, and the Chaminade Literary Review; among other journals. She has also edited two scholarly collections with Palgrave Macmillan, Sapphire's Literary Breakthrough: Erotic Literacies, Feminist Pedagogies, Environmental Justice Perspectives (2012), nominated for the 2013 Association of American Colleges and Universities' Frederic W. Ness Book Award for an outstanding book that “contributes to the understanding and improvement of liberal education,” and Mapping Queer Space(s) of Praxis and Pedagogy (Queer Studies in Education Series, 2017).

About Four Chambers Press
Four Chambers Press is an independent community press based in Phoenix, AZ whose mission is to give greater visibility to the literary arts, encourage their larger participation in the cultural scene, and develop a more active community of writers and readers. For more information, visit http://fourchamberspress.com